

Message Text

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70

ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-03 EB-11 L-03 INT-08 PA-04 PRS-01

SS-20 NSC-10 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 INR-10

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 IO-14 /111 R

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R 282156Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018141

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EFIS, BU

SUBJECT: SEIZURE OF BULGARIAN FISHING VESSEL

REF: STATE 17627, SOFIA 98

ROME FOR US DEL TO ICNAF

1. CAPTAIN OF BULGARIAN VESSEL LIMOZA WAS ARRAIGNED IN NEW YORK JANUARY 26 ON CHARGES OF HAVING CARRIED OUT FISHING OPERATIONS IN CONTRAVENTION OF 16 USC 1081. (ASSUME EMB HAS TEXT). MAXIMUM CRIMINAL PENALTY FOR CAPTAIN UNDER LAW IS \$100,000 FINE AND 1 YEAR IMPRISONMENT. IN PRACTICE, FINES HAVE GENERALLY BEEN CONSIDERABLY LESS AND PRISON SENTENCE ALMOST NEVER IMPOSED. IN ADDITION, VESSEL AND EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS ALL FISH PRESUMED TO HAVE BEEN CAUGHT IN RESTRICTED ZONE COULD BE FORFEITED. IN LIEU OF SUCH FORFEITURE, MONETARY DAMAGES COULD BE ASSESSED.

2. PRESENT PLANS ARE FOR HEARING ON CASE TO BE HELD
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FEBRUARY 5. SHIP IS BEING DETAINED AT GOVERNOR'S ISLAND,

WITH CAPTAIN AND CREW ABOARD. BULGARIAN TRADE MISSION REPRESENTATIVE WAS ALLOWED ON BOARD SOON AFTER VESSEL ARRIVED JANUARY 26, AND BULGARIANS HAVE HAD CONTINUING CONTACTS WITH CAPTAIN SINCE THEN.

3. SEIZURE WAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE IN NEW YORK TIMES JANUARY 27 AND 28. COVERAGE, WHICH CENTERED ON FACTUAL DETAILS OF SEIZURE, INCLUDED COMMENT BY US COMMERCIAL FISHING INTERESTS HAILING SEIZURE AS NEEDED STEP TO CURB FOREIGN FISHING OFF EAST COAST. DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN REPLIED TO QUESTIONS JANUARY 28 BY NOTING THAT CASE WAS WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF THE COURTS.

4. IF BULGARIANS PRESS YOU FOR INFORMATION ON CASE, YOU SHOULD REPLY THAT MATTER IS NOW ONE FOR THE COURTS AND THAT CAPTAIN AND HIS ATTORNEY WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THEIR CASE. YOU SHOULD ADD THAT YOU ASSUME BULGARIANS IN US WILL KEEP GOB INFORMED ON DEVELOPMENTS IN CASE. YOU SHOULD AVOID SPECULATION ON POSSIBLE PENALTIES OR DAMAGES. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

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